

977.358504
H759



ILLINOIS HISTORICAL SURVEY



A Little Town

I like to live in a little town,
Where the trees meet over the street.
You wave your hand and say "Hello",
To everyone that you meet.
I like to stop for a minute
Outside of a grocery store,
And hear the kindly gossip
Of the folks moving in next door.
For life is interwoven
With friends you learn to know,
And feel their joys and sorrows
As they come and go.
So I'm glad to live in a little town,
And care no more to roam.
For every house in a little town,
Is more than a house.
It's a home.

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Member F. D. I. C.

Weldon, Illinois

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WELDON

100 Years

1872 - 1972

In the early days of our state, our fathers were of many trades and they came looking for a better place to live and to find a new way of life. From the east, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana, to the west, they moved by covered wagon and river-boats. Later they came by iron rail to Illinois, seeking the rich buffalo swamp grasslands that could be turned into grain fields. It has been said that in Illinois you could see right down to the horizon and you had 180 degrees of an arc of blue sky in spring when the early morning boom of the prairie chicken was startling to the farmer still in slumber. The meadowlarks and bobolinks brew the gold of their songs into your ear and the call of the black crow to its mate brought your eyes to dwell on a sky with vast moving clouds forming summer thunderheads.

These fertile farmlands to be were a gift of the ice age glaciators, which made their greatest southerly penetration in Illinois. There were woods, prairie groves along the creeks and riverlets, giant cottonwood trees, bur oaks, red haws, hedge

apples and hickories in almost every county.

The early settlers founded the county of DeWitt and Salt Creek ran from northeast to west, draining the full length of fertile land along it. Early DeWitt County farm families began to move into the northeast undeveloped part of the county. William Nixon and Smith Fuller of DeWitt Township rode on horseback to Houston, Texas, in 1856, in order to buy 500 sheep each. They drove the one thousand head of sheep back to eastern DeWitt County and were the first farmers in the community to have cattle and sheep grazing on the prairies where Weldon now stands. A.M. Pue broke the first prairie sod and raised the first crop of corn.

George, William and Morris Nixon were some of the first early settlers. They were brothers and came from Ohio in the year 1850, settling in different parts of the township. In 1859, at the time of the township organization, the commissioners gave the township the name of Nixon in their honor.



Cicero Twist was the first settler in Nixon Township.

The first settlement began in 1850, and the first to locate in this township was Cicero Twist in the spring of 1850. He settled in Section 8 and that year broke a small patch of prairie and raised a crop of sod corn. There had been land cultivated within its boundaries, years before but by parties living near the borders, not citizens of the township. Milo Twist, one of eight, was the first white child born in the township and the

Twist family lived in a crude cabin constructed of rough logs just as they were cut from native timber.

The last settled township in the county was Nixon. It contained a prairie surface with only now and then a few groves of timber of a very small growth. Its form was irregular and contained 27 sections. The surface was flat or level but of a deep rich soil specially adapted to the growth of grasses or corn.

Friends Creek and a small tributary in the north part of the township flowed in a southerly course through its territory. Two brooks took the same course through the township and these constituted the surface drainage.

John Manlove and a brother-in-law, Hiram Chandler, were also first citizens. C. S. Lisenby improved land in the early days of the township but resided in Creek Township. A Rush and Kate Shipman were the first couple married in the township.

Grains, corn, wheat and oats were to become the main cash crops and were delivered to market by wagon to Clinton, Mt. Pleasant. During the frozen seasons, delivery was made to Decatur by wagon on roads, or sled on the ice of Friends Creek, running in a southerly direction to the Sangamon River, and to the processing plant of A. E. Staley Co. Grain and cattle were also hauled and driven overland to Chicago.

On one crossroad a store, blacksmith shop and a schoolhouse formed the first settlement of Shoo Fly and was directly northeast of the present village of Weldon.

The prevalence of horse flies in that vicinity was the reason it was so named. The following story confirms the naming of the town: "It is said the prominent lawyer, C. H. Moore, of Clinton, rode a circuit on horseback from Monticello to Bloomington and would stop at one of his tenants, James Baker, northeast of Weldon, at dinner time to rest his white horse. The horse would be red with dripping blood caused by the sucking green tailed deer flies. The tenant's young sons would wash the horse down so that it would be white again and ready to go."

With many bushels of grain and many head of cattle to be marketed... accompanied by a demand for raw materials, a railroad was soon found to be needed. At this time the government entered the picture and gave every sixth mile of land to a division of the Wabash, St. Louis & Pacific Railway. This was used to form a railroad called "The Peanut Line," which runs from Champaign to Havana, Illinois... a total of 110 miles. The history of this road dates from the incorporation of the Monticello Railroad Co. February 21, 1861. The line from White Heath to Havana, an extension from Monticello to Decatur, was completed by Havana, Mason City, Lincoln & Eastern Railroad

CONGRATULATIONS

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THE TWIST FAMILY. Milo Twist, extreme right, was the first white child born in Nixon Township. From left to right, Birdie Twist Milligan, mother of Aubrey T. Milligan; Mrs. Milo Twist; Earl Twist; Roy Twist; Aubrey Milligan, and Milo Twist.



John McGinnis was the first postmaster of Nixon Township. The postoffice was located and housed in a room of an old house on the farm where Duane Riddle now lives.



in 1873. In March, 1888, the formal lease was signed and the Illinois Central took over operations and is still owner of said railroad.

In 1872 a town of Weldon was laid out adjacent to the railroad, and stores were built one block north of the present main street. This section was destroyed by fire in the summer of 1879 and new stores were built at the present location.

The village of Weldon, Illinois, was surveyed and platted by surveyor, John Brown, in the spring of 1872. It was placed on record in the fall of 1873, by Colonel Thomas Snell, Charles S. Lisenby, James Alexander and James DeLand.

Charles S. Lisenby, rich landowner, sold his land in parts and invested in, and helped develop the village of Weldon.

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Weldon, Illinois

Oat binder driven by Fred Dressler shown dropping bundles to be shocked.



Threshing crew blowing straw into barn for cattle bedding on the James Coffman farm.

Load of corn to be scooped into crib. Fifty bushels was a good load.



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Weldon, Illinois

DEWITT
COUNTY
DEMOCRATS

DeWitt County, Illinois



The Illinois Central Railroad Station

The village was named in honor of Lawrence Weldon, a prominent lawyer of Bloomington, Illinois, who was also an attorney for the railroad, and took an active part in determining where the railroad would be built.

The first two-story home was built by Charles S. Lisenby in 1872. The first church started in 1872, on land donated by Colonel Snell, for that purpose. The first store was built in

1873. The Winslow Brothers operated this store. The first stock consisted of drugs and groceries, but soon merged into a general store. The building was a framed construction, 20 by 60 feet and two stories high. It was located between Water and North Street. It was destroyed by fire in the summer of 1879. The next stores were built on the next block south, which is known as High or Main Street.



Main Street - early 1880's

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Dependable
People

Field Seeds-Cleaning

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Early Businesses In Weldon



This is Hickle's Restaurant, as it was before the fire, in the location where Moore's Hardware now stands. It was owned by Sam and Tez Hickle. The AF&AM lodge rooms were on the second floor.

The next several years Weldon was a very progressive little town. It boasted two hotels, two general stores, a grocer, two restaurants, a confectionery, a meat market, a drug store, one millinery shop, operated by Nora Reed(Baker), two barber shops, a lumber and coal yard and three grain elevators.

The first blacksmith shop was built in 1873. It was operated by James Paulson. The first hotel was built and operated by John Bennett in 1874. The first postmaster was J. C. Coulter, in 1873. The postoffice was located in the depot. At this time Weldon's inhabitants were about 600. It was one of the most progressive and best conducted villages of its size in the state.

C. J. Seaborg was the operator of a wagon and carriage factory, established in 1874. It is said that some of Weldon's first autos were assembled in his shop. There were stockyards in the west part of town, J. H. Scott and Robert Given, being two of the early buyers, driving the livestock to town on foot. Mrs. J. T. Thomas owned a loom and in her home she wove many rag carpets, which were sold around Weldon. Mr. George W. Baker sold furniture, farm implements, silverware, jewelry, etc., in his store. Mr. Baker was also the local undertaker. There was also a men's clothing store for many years.

A bank was first organized as a private concern by Jacob Swigart in 1887. It was later organized as a state bank in 1906, with Carl Swigart as president, D. M. Smallwood, vice president, H. T. Swigart, cashier, and Charles C. Lisenby, assistant cashier.

Weldon was incorporated in 1892. The first meeting of the board of trustees of the village was held in Worship Gray's office, August 15, 1892. T. C. Byland presided, A. M. Drew, C. J. Seaborg, Robert Given and J. H. Scott were the board members, with C. L. Townsend as clerk. On a motion by Dr. Drew, seconded by C. J. Seaborg, a committee was appointed to draft a municipal code for the government of the village of Weldon. Robert Given, T. C. Byland and J. M. Scott were appointed to draft this code. It was voted that the ordinance of Clinton be adopted as much as would pertain to the village of Weldon. The records show that T. C. Byland was paid \$15.00 for writing it. Plans were soon made to build many board walks, also a town house, a prison or a calaboose. A calaboose was needed as there were three saloons at this time or soon after. The calaboose was built on a lot belonging to William Gray, purchased by the village for \$25.00. Labor to build the building was \$23.75. The lumber was hauled from Clinton, with horses

and wagon, at \$2.00 per load. On May 4, 1896, Nixon Township and the Village of Weldon bought a lot across the street east from the present United Methodist Church on which to build a town and village hall, two-thirds of the cost paid by the township and one-third by the village. It was built in 1896. The building is presently being used as the Centennial General Store.

The calaboose was moved onto the back of the village and township lot. It consisted of three cells. The calaboose was torn down and most of the lumber used to build a pump house on Main Street for the present water system. This house has since been torn down. The three cell gates are presently owned by Loren Richardson and are in use in his barn. They are of oak and made by C. J. Seaborg.



An early tavern in Weldon. Among those identified are Jim Long, Henry Alsbury and Sam Baker (second, third and fourth from left) and Sam Fairbanks and D. Miles (ninth and tenth from left).

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, WELDON!

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neighbors on this important occasion.*

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and pride in all of De Witt County.*

*We look forward to seeing you in our
new home!!*

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51½ Hours Weekly



Nora Reed ran a millinery shop. She was the daughter of a Methodist preacher and married Arthur Baker.



Doc Halcome's store and restaurant served Weldon in the early part of the century. Shown are Doc Halcome, Bob Jones, Charlie Hunt and Thomas Danison.

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Seaborg Blacksmith Shop. Buggies were made and farm machinery sold and repaired.



Swigart's Bank was the first bank in Weldon and was burned in an early fire. The bank was replaced and housed in the present bank building.

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WELDON, ILLINOIS



The livery stable was located where the United Methodist Church now stands.

At a meeting of the village board on April 6, 1896, a motion was made to contact Colonel Snell for an appointment to discuss buying Reserve Block One for a park. This block was just west of the present park. The only other mention of a park is in minutes of meeting of May 4, 1896. On motion the question of buying Reserve Block One for a park be dismissed, no reason given.

The mode of transportation was horse and buggy, plus as many as four passenger trains per day, two each way, 6 days a week. Also two freight trains per day to haul in supplies and haul out grain and livestock.

In 1895 a franchise was granted Harry Swigart, Sr., to erect a light plant and waterworks. There were several industries in the early days, one being a tile factory located on the ground now owned by Hubert Lisenby. Others were a canning factory located where Frank Massey now has his mobile home. In season there were as many as 20 persons employed here. James Danison was one of the first owners, later in 1903, L. P. Moore built and operated a canning factory at his home which was east of the present cemetery.

In 1897 the board of trustees granted rights to the Union Telephone Company to place poles and wire on village streets to supply communications for the convenience of the public. The early fire protection system consisted of fire plugs, five hundred feet of hose and a hose cart, which was ample protection as there were not many fires.

In 1903 the village purchased the light plant and waterworks from Mr. Swigart. The bonds for the purchase of these were paid off by the spring of 1909. About the same time there was great interest in the raising of fine poultry and as much as \$30.00 was paid for one setting of eggs. The Poultry Association held its first show in 1907, with judges coming from Indiana and Michigan.

In 1898 Weldon had a very creditable Opera House which was built by a stock company for \$5,000.00. The stock company was composed of Harry Swigart, P. M. Smallwood, D. Gift, C. A. Gale, L. S. Carr and T. A. Ayers. Much of the village entertainment was held here. The Opera House was located on the present site of the fire house.

In 1909 Emmett Gray & Company built an ice house for the storing of ice to use in connection with their meat market and for sale to the public. It was filled with ice cut from Hall's

Pond in winter for the next summer's use. The ice was stored in saw dust for its keeping. It was filled the last time in 1924 when manufactured ice took its place. The building has since been torn down.

At one time Jacob Zoger operated a cane press. Farmers would bring loads of sugar cane, from which was extracted a very sweet juice, which in turn was placed in very large kettles and was boiled down to sorghum.

It has been said that at this time there was a library in town which was later moved out to the L. P. Moore residence.



Old Town and Village Hall, and former Library. Now owned by the Lions Club.

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Rogers Grain Company was owned by A. J. Beier & Son. It was one of the earliest grain companies.



John Henry Colescott at his department store, between the Kieser building and Dr. marvel's office, across from Moore's Hardware. Sign inside read "Free Peanuts Tomorrow."



Old Opera House in Weldon. It was used by early school for plays.



Weldon Fire Department - new fire truck.



Weldon Fire Department - first fire truck.

**When The Republicans
Took Office There Were
545,000 Americans in
Viet Nam-
Today There Are Less Than
50,000 Of Our Men There.**

**When The Republicans
Took Office There Were
75.6 Million People
Employed In The U. S.
Today The Number Of
People Working
Is 81.2 Million**



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Representative in Congress



HARBER H. HALL

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GILBERT L. DEAVERS

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States Attorney

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NOVEMBER 7th
FOR A
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Of
Peace**

**DEWITT COUNTY REPUBLICAN
CENTRAL COMMITTEE**

Businesses and

People In Weldon

When I Can

First Remember

By Mrs. Sylvia Barclay

Hotel - Costleys

Rooming House - Nealy Cox

Doctors - Dr. Drew and Dr. Taylor

Hardware - Moorehead (father and son, I believe, Sam and Omar)

Grocery - Uncle Billy Gray (Gene Gray's father)

Postmaster - J. Pace (murdered Dr. Taylor)

Postmaster - William Costley, also a Civil War soldier

Postmaster - Mr. Phares (had a son, Wallace)

Druggist - Miles (had six sons (?) and a daughter)

Restaurant - Minnie Costley Colescott - think later on a bakery
(one son, Ralph)

School teacher - Will Sawyers, also rural mail carrier, had a wife, son and daughter

School teacher part time - Tom Byland (had a son and 5 daughters)

School teacher - Stackhouse (had wife, 4 daughters and a son)

School teacher - George Gray (had several children, married one of Gene Gray's sisters (no relation), Mrs. Virginia Reeser, a daughter and Mabel Mire

Butcher Shop - 'Sweat' Carr (don't know real name) he had a wife and 2 daughters

Saloon Keeper - Jock Reddick (wife and son)

Dry Goods Store - Covey (one son, Guy)

General Store - Lafferty and Lockett (Lockett had a daughter)

Banker - Carl Swigart and sons, Tag and Cooper

Blacksmith - Charles Seaborg (wife and daughter, Amanda, who married Cooper Swigart)

Real Estate - A. Fullerton (wife, son and daughter)

Lumber Yard - Harve Scott and Charles Gale (Scott had a daughter, Maude, who married Mr. Gale)

Minister M. P. Church - Davenport (no relation to Jerry Davenport)

Barber - A negro man had a shop overhead a store on the south side of Main Street (never heard his name)

Musician - Mack Summers and his brother, Elmer

Brick Mason - Summers (father of Mack and Elmer)

Weldon Record - Montgomerys (mother and 2 sons, one Homer)

Village Marshall - Daniel Reicheldarger (we called him Rattle-daffer) He had a son, Charles.

Millinery Shop - (on south side of Main Street) a widow named Rainey, with a son and daughter lived behind the shop.

Drayman - Baker, had a son, Alonzo (no relation to English Bakers)

Dressmakers - Mrs. George O'Brien, Mrs. Emma Benson (widow), Mrs. William Sawyers, Mrs. Hardesty (widow), Allie Danison (never married), Mrs. Charles Townsend

Barbers - Charles Townsend and Gene Lowe (both men had families)

Furniture Store - two Pearl Brothers (on north side of the street)

Undertaker - George Baker (son of Danny Baker)

Section Boss - Jack Fleming (Illinois Central) had a wife, 3 daughters and 2 sons



Old timers that ran the town - from left, John Bostley, Robert Givens, Jerry Davenport, John Galaway, John Brown, Oliver Parr, Clay Phares, Bill Davis from Cisco.

OTHER WELDON RESIDENTS

Mr. Givens and wife

Hall Family - lived in northeast part of town

Moore Family - widow and 2 bachelor sons and at least 3 old maid daughters - lived east of the cemetery - had lots of fruit for sale

Shaver Family - lived east of town

Twist Family - west of town

Smallwood Family - lived near town, south

Mr. and Mrs. Billy Dillavou - lived a mile or so west of the old Twist farm, Mrs. Barclay's father was born there in 1858

Al Heffley and wife - lived in Weldon. A swedish couple, no children, lived in the northwest part of town at the very edge.

First Elevator - was south of Ernest Crossan's former home on Main Street - it was the only one in Weldon then - can't remember name of man that run it.

Mr. Zorger - believe his name was Jake. He lived in north part of town with his wife and daughter. He made sorghum for people. I think he raised his own sugar cane.

George Gale Family - Son, Harry, was killed in First World War.

Sam Fairbanks Family -

Reuther Family - father, mother and 4 children

Emsley Garrets - lived where Lisenby Filling Station is now

Tombro Family -

David Miles Family - no relation to druggist - I think he ran a livery barn where the church is today

Silas and Mahlon Hand Families -

Mrs. Mary Hardesty and Family - (widow) - Tulip woman, lived where Eldo Mire lives now

Robert Flood - wife, daughters and granddaughter

Andrew Allen - no children, married Charity Flood, a school teacher)

Smith Family - father of Clara Smith (aunt of Clara Dickey). He married a school teacher, Cora Evans.

Mr. Shields - friend of Mrs. Barclay's grandfather - had one daughter

Widow Danison - She had at least 4 children, one was the well-known Lou Danison, a musician (aunt of Russell Danison).

Widow Danison - mother of Lottie Ayers and Nellie

Lisenbys - one of them was Charles Lisenby's father

Mrs. Emma Benson - a widow with 3 children, Sam, Gertrude Sudsor and Nellie

Walker Family - had a daughter - lived in the far northeast part of Weldon

McNeir Family - had 2 daughters, Fannie and Nellie - lived just south of old M.E. Church

Widow McNeir - with several children

Mrs. McConkey - a widow with several children - lived east of old M.P. Church. One daughter married Carl Swigart. I think they had 2 daughters.

Mrs. Schwimm - a widow (grandmother to Guy Mawhinney)

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AREA CODE 217 687-4540 Seymour, Ill.

AREA CODE 217 762-2252 White Heath, Ill.

Mrs. Barclay Remembers.

Thomas Family - father, mother, 4 sons, 2 daughters. All the children but one daughter older than Mrs. Barclay. Mr. Thomas was from Tennessee, a former Confederate soldier. He was always Marshal with the G.A.R. in Weldon. They invited him to do so.

Henry Alsbury Family -

Jim Lane Family - father, mother, 2 step daughters named Flood, several sons and daughters of his own. I think 2 sons were in the army. One was in World War I, I think. I think that one of the stepdaughters, Mattie Girard, may be alive in Decatur now, was a few years ago (Longview Place). One or two of his daughters, Armadilla and an older one, may still be living.

Wesley Emery Family - wife and 4 daughters, one daughter was Mrs. Gertrude Danison

G.A.R. Members - as Mrs. Barclay remembers

Mr. Phil Day, Mr. Shelds, Sam Fairbanks, Squire Brown, Mr. Phares (W. H. Gray's grandfather, also a postmaster), and Mr. Thomas, a Confederate soldier.

Still Winslow - lived where Don Ferguson now lives. He later moved to Weldon. He had stallions in Weldon. He was a very inadequate horse doctor.

People who lived in the country near Weldon and traded there as near as I can remember (most of them must have been there 100 years ago. I was born in 1888, and moved to Weldon with my grandparents, the Jerry Davenports, about 1890.

Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Davenport - Mrs. Barclay's grandparents

Mr. and Mrs. Billy Dillavou - Mrs. Barclay's grandparents

Dave and Nathan Parker - Mrs. Barclay's uncles

Sam McNeir - his wife was Mrs. Barclay's father's sister.

Phil Day - his wife was Mrs. Barclay's Grandmother Davenport's sister

Jim Coffman - father of Jim Coffman, also Arete Halcom's grandfather

Abe Long Family

Thorp Family

Goble Family - lived where Park Baker lived later

Twist Family - Mrs. Barclay's husband's mother was a Twist

Sandy Allen Family - Polly Allen's parents

Crossan Family - Ernest Crossan's grandparents

On the north road to town, first the Shinneman Family. I don't know how early some of these families were, but there were the Kellys, Dode Garrets, Ollie Keel, Milo Twist, McDeeds (also my aunt), Dresslers and Holmquists.

Curt Heffley's parents lived north of Weldon. His mother was an O'Brien.

A Kelly Family lived on the north road to Weldon, a daughter married Dave Jimmerson later.

The English Bakers, Jimmy Pearl Family (Henrletta Brown's father), Reasers, Billy Pearl, Shavers, Holier Family, Smallwoods, Glasgows, Olsons, Cox Family, and Shaws all traded in Weldon. Those were horse and buggy days.



Weldon's Main Street, from the west, as it is today.

In this year of 1972, as we proudly celebrate our Centennial, the following places of business presently serve and meet the needs of the people of the town and surrounding area which consists of many acres of fertile farm land.

The Weldon State Bank. President E. Lyle Savage began his duties in the bank in 1966. His brother, vice-president Donald E. Savage, moved to Weldon in 1971. Vice-president Joseph L. Savage of Sioux City, Iowa, is a son of E. Lyle Savage.

The Kingston Insurance Agency is a merger of the V. L. Shinneman-Kingston Insurance Agency and the W. H. Gray Insurance Agency. Corwin Kingston took full charge of this business in 1964.

Another business that has been in the town for many years is the Trigg Funeral Home which was purchased from Carl Stamper by the late Charles C. Trigg in 1943, and joined by his son, James C. Trigg, the present owner, since 1947.

To take care of the many phases of this mechanical age and farming operations we have several businesses.

The Weldon Oil Company, selling Shell products and having a bulk plant as well as a modern filling station, was established by the late Charles C. Lisenby in 1923. Today his sons, Donald and Hubert Lisenby, own and operate the business. Phillip Lisenby, a son of Hubert Lisenby, is also an associate.

The Standard Oil Company also has a bulk plant and filling station. The bulk plant and trucks are operated by Roger Adams who took over the business in 1959, after Andrew Jackson retired having been 35 years with the company. The Standard Filling Station, located at the junction of Routes 48 and 10 north of town, is operated by William Westray.

Cecil Shinneman built the present garage in 1938 which is now operated by Oscar Baylor.

Ross Twist now has a repair shop for power lawn mowers and other small engines.

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The late D. G. Schmidt owned the Welding Shop which he started in 1932 and has been operated by Edward Welch since 1948.

The Hardware Store owned by Clifford Moore since 1958, purchased from Ray Aydelott, has been the site of a hardware store for many years. It was originally owned by the late Thomas Ayers and his daughter, Minnie, and son-in-law, George Luhrsen, who sold it to Bruce Axtell.

The Weldon Co-operative Elevator is a merger of the two former elevators, the Martin Elevator and the Railsback Elevator.

The Weldon Fertilizer and Lumber Co., was started in 1962 by Ronald Edwards, the present owner.

To keep the community fed are the following businesses:

The Weldon Restaurant has been in operation many years. Mrs. Dean (Edith) Baker is the present operator.

Kings Grocery and Meat Store, opened about 1927 by the late James R. King and his wife Susie King, has been owned by their son, Donald King, since 1951.

Stines Grocery and Meat Store has been owned and operated

by Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Stine since 1950.

The Roberts Fruit and Vegetable Market is an open air market, open only during the summer months. It is owned by Edward Roberts, now a Farmer City resident. This market was started in the summer of 1956 while Eddie was still a student in the Weldon school. It is located at the junction of Routes 48 and 10 north of town.

To keep all in the community well groomed are the following:

The Weldon Laundry and Dry Cleaning establishment, with modern coin-operated machines, was started in September, 1962, by Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Shinneman.

Mrs. Bessie Willis has owned the Bessie's Beauty Shop since 1939.

Betty's Beauty Shop was started in 1958 on Main Street and moved to her new home on Route 48 in 1966, by Mrs. Clifford (Betty Jane) Moore.

Michael White is now the barber in the Weldon Barber Shop he purchased from Howard Behrens early this year (1972).

Ralph Kiester is an upholsterer, Glindo Eastham sells insurance, Charles Workman's have a craftshop and Larry Helton is a general contractor - all in our town of Weldon.



The Weldon Oil Company was the first bulk plant in the county, and it was located next to the stockyards. This plant went into operation April 21, 1923. Roy Fields was the truck driver and delivered fuel to farmers and to other stations around the county.

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Weldon Tile Works

The Weldon Tile Works began January 28, 1884, by Charles J. Seaborg and Kate Seaborg, his wife, and Andrew Allan. Andrew Allan purchased one-half of the Tile Factory consisting of the engine, tile machines, brick machines, moulds, pumps, pipes, sheds, lumber and track on January 28, 1884, for \$2,000.00, with four notes of even date for \$500.00 each due 1, 2, 3 and 4 years from date with 8% interest payable annually. The Weldon Tile Works was situated on five acres of land with the following boundaries: commencing on the section line between Sections 9 and 10 in Township 19 in Range 4 East at the point where the said Section line is intersected by the North line of the right of way of the Wabash, St. Louis and Pacific Railway Company and running thence East 80 rods, on the line of said company right of way, thence North 10 rods, thence West 80 rods, thence South 10 rods to the place of beginning, DeWitt County, Illinois.

Later in the same year on March 1, Isaac Shinneman became owner of one-third of the five acres of land. This was sold to Mr. Shinneman for \$1,200.00, of which there were two notes of even date for \$600.00 each due December 15, 1884, and December 15, 1885, with 8% interest from date.

Part of this original five acres of land was still owned by John A and Alice M Lisenby who sold the undivided 1/20th for \$25.00 on April 7, 1886. This land began at the Section line dividing Sections 9 and 10 in Township 19 North, Range 4 East of the 3rd Principal Meridian at a point where said section line is intersected by the North line of the right of way of the Wabash, St. Louis and Pacific Railroad Company thence East along the fourth margin of the said right of way 80 rods thence North 10 rods, thence West 80 rods thence South 10 rods to the beginning, DeWitt County, Illinois.



Elevator and water towers show the old and new. Most all of the early water system had been replaced at this time (1937).

Weldon Elevators

The first elevator was built in 1881 by C. S. Lisenby where the Weldon Co-op is located. It was 16x40 and 40 feet high, had 5 log dumps, was run by a 20 h.p. steam engine, and had a capacity of about 4,000 bushels a day. Cribs for about 25,000 bushels of ear corn were located near it. Four men were employed.

It was sold to John Robinson who operated it until his death in the early 1900's and then sold to W. A. Webb and his father who sold it to the Weldon Grain Co., when that company was organized.

The elevator on the south side of the tracks was evidently built by Carl Swigart and operated by his son, Cooper, who sold it to William Susdorf. It was then bought by the Railsback Brothers about 1910 and operated by Lee Railsback until his death. It is now owned by the Weldon Co-op.

Another elevator was built on the switch north of the depot. It was run for some time by Ira Nixon and by Arthur Beires for several years. It was owned by Roger Bacon Grain Co., and finally sold to the Weldon Grain Co., who used it for storage.

The C H Moore Estate had a building with office and scales

across the tracks south of the present grain company elevators but was never used to buy grain.

Weldon has always been an important country grain station and once ranked third in the state for taking grain directly from the farms. The Weldon Grain Co., was organized by a group of farmers about 1920 and was managed successively by Mr. Groves, William Susdorf, Harry Roseman, and E. O. Martin. Mr. Martin later acquired the facilities which were operated by him and his family until 1954, when they were sold to the United Grain Co., of Champaign.

The Weldon Co-op Grain Co., was organized in 1954 and acquired the E. O. Martin grain facilities from the United Grain Co., in 1958. The present concrete house was built in 1965 with a storage capacity of 250,000 bushels and 2 legs having a 7500 bushel per hour elevating capacity each. The Railsback facilities were purchased in 1970 by the Weldon Co-op.

On October 16, 1971, 71,816 bushels of corn were taken in from the farms surrounding Weldon, so it seems that Weldon is destined to continue as an important country grain station.

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DELAND, ILLINOIS

.... taken from Mrs Lisenby's story of Weldon

By Birdie Boaz

Mrs. Gale reported an attempt to start a library in the village but the books were moved to the home of L. P. (Porter) Moore. It has been told that most of the books were his.

The establishing of a permanent library was later accomplished by the Weldon Woman's Club and supported by them for twenty years before the township took it over.

The Weldon Woman's Club was originally the Ideal Improvement Club organized in 1899. Mrs. Maudo Gale was one of the organizers.

In 1876 Weldon citizens had a frame building erected for a school. It was a two story, 20x40 feet at the ground level. The cost was \$2,000. Two teachers were hired to serve the maximum 75 pupils. It was partly graded and considered a good school at that time. A number of citizens attended who are

with us today and some have graduated from a three year high school and are very proud that they were, although there seems to be no recognition of that accomplishment. It wasn't easy to go to high school in those days.

In 1892 Weldon's first paper was published by a Mrs. S. M. Ewing (Sarah), who lived in Farmer City with her husband who was a publisher in that town. Mrs. Ewing and Son, as she used the name, did their printing in the back room of the Swigart Bank. Later the son, A. H. Montgomery, erected a brick building on the south side of Main Street and this became the Printing Shop. After his retirement, there were other owners and other places of printing. One, a Mr. McBride, used a room on the first floor of the Weldon Opera House.



Weldon Grade School, the first wood frame building used as a grade school and three year high school.

Dredge machine that cut out a ditch forming a small creek which flowed into and is now Friends Creek. It made it possible for Weldon's drainage and the surrounding farm lands. It scooped a path and floated on water. The back part of the machine was living quarters.



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Two of the Pearl brothers had an opera house on the north side of Main Street. Lodges may have met there. Also dances were held there.

Other entertainment included. Horse and bicycle racing and baseball games south of town on the Sherman Miller farm.

Tent shows, especially Percy's, for summer time.

Fourth of July, always celebrated with fireworks at night. On one of these occasions the fireworks almost became a disaster. There was a lot of scrambling for cover when the fireworks set the band stand on fire. H. T. Swigart and helpers soon got it under control. One small boy received an injury to his eye.

Weldon was represented in the state legislature by two of its citizens Dr. W. H. Taylor, who had served in the Civil War, had come to this vicinity in 1871, settling with his wife at Shoo Fly where she taught in the school. This building burned as many buildings did in those days. They moved into Weldon when the town was started and the Doctor and Mrs. Carl Swigart, cashier at the bank established by Jacob Swigart, went to Springfield to serve their community and the state.

It seems almost unbelievable today, but in earlier times the village had two or more doctors and a dentist.

The year 1913 was a bad year for Weldon. A flood, early in March, was followed by an attack of dysentery which took the lives of several persons, then the disastrous fire of August 1, 1913. The fire started in a harness shop on the north side of Main Street, completely burning all of that side, with the exception of four buildings at the east end. Sparks flew over

to the Carr residence where Mr. and Mrs. William Atteberry live and burned the home.

Two events in 1919 should be remembered. The first, the military funeral in the school yard for Harry Gale, whose life was taken in World War I. He would have been graduated in the 1919 class. Their Annual was dedicated to him.

The second event was the famous barbecue, also in the school yard, in October, 1919. This was to honor those who had returned from World War I. Pits were prepared and several beef roasted for days. This was done by experts. Eighteen hundred potatoes and 2200 roasting ears were cooked in large tanks of steam. A new gadget was introduced to the workers that day which was a bread slicer. There were gallons of coffee and 2,000 pies. All food was free and enjoyed by many hundreds of people.

Two young ladies, Minnie Marsh Twist and Bertha Hickle, thought of a project in 1925 which they discussed with Cy Hall, a resident in the northeast part of the village. Adjoining his property to the south was a cow pasture. To the above mentioned ladies, this would make an excellent park. Mr. Hall had recently lost his mother and his first wife, Belle, and the idea of a memorial park met with his approval. The ladies were to collect a fund to be used for landscaping and a memorial for Harry Gale. The funds were collected and on October 17, 1925, the park was dedicated with a program, both afternoon and evening. After World War II a memorial was added for Carl L. Wene, James C. Hiter, Merle Hiter, Jr., and Edgar Lyle Glenn



A homecoming barbecue held in 1919 in the grade school yard attracted 10,000 persons. Two thousand pies were served.



Harry Gale, killed in World War I, was given a military funeral by the U. S. Army at Weldon. Picture shows street to cemetery in 1918.



Weldon Park. The land was donated by Cyrus Hall.

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In March of 1913 the floods came. Shown above, street running west to business district from Route 48. Alfred Conover's residence in the foreground.



Home on the right was built by H. F. Swigart and is presently owned by Clifford Doffs. Buildings in the background were stores on north side of business district before fire.



In March of 1913 the floods came. Tile had not yet been put in for drainage and the town was under water. MP Church, west to Catholic, known as Water Street.

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The Weldon business district caught fire in a harness shop around noon on Aug. 7, 1913 and most of the buildings on the north side of the street burned to the ground. The buildings that replaced those destroyed by the fire are still standing today.

Nixon Township Park

In the summer of 1961, a large concrete platform was built in the center of the park. To make room for the platform the Memorial Monument for Harry Gale, who died in World War I, was moved south and east of the Monument honoring the four men who lost their lives in World War II. The men from Nixon Township who made the supreme sacrifice in World War II

whose names appear on this monument are Carl L. Wene, James C. Hiter, Merle Hiter Jr., and Edgar Lyle Glenn.

In 1966 a roof was built over the platform making a fine pavilion in the park. A building with rest room facilities was erected just north of the pavilion in 1962. In 1971, the tennis courts and basketball courts were built.

The Schools of Weldon

The first record of a school in Nixon Township was the Twist School beginning in 1856. Other rural schools were opened in following years, each serving the pupils of four sections of land. Rural schools of Nixon Township and other areas surrounding Weldon were Lincoln, Prairie View, Champion, Twist, Reed, Wantwood, Swigart, Bosselman, Excelsior, Rosecrans, White Pigeon, Union, and Shiloh. The first school in Weldon was built in 1876, which was a two-story frame building 24 by 40 feet, at a cost of \$2,000.00. This building was located on the site of the present brick building. It did not have the convenience of inside plumbing.

The frame building was replaced in 1910 by a well built brick building at a cost of \$18,000.00. This structure was modern with a full basement, a first floor with three classrooms, a second floor with three classrooms and an office.

Early in the history of the grade school, a three year high school was provided for those who wished to continue their education beyond the eighth grade. One teacher, the principal, taught all three grades located in one room on the second floor and shared this room with some of the grammar school pupils.

The Nixon Township High School District was formed and began in September, 1916, as a four year high school. The school occupied two rooms and the office on the second floor of the grade school building. The first graduating class of Nixon High was the class of 1918.

The school rented the Opera House, located where the fire station now stands. It was used for basketball, plays and music programs. It was a small space on the second floor but included

a stage. The basketball court was very small with no out-of-bounds at each end. The baskets were nailed to the walls. The floor was unfinished and not too clean most of the time, making knee pads a necessity.

The high school was very crowded so in 1921 a temporary structure (called a "sheep shed" by the pupils) was added. After work had begun the board learned that a vote of the people of the district was necessary before the bills could be legally paid. A favorable vote was tallied in the hastily called election.

In the fall of 1925, the high school left its crowded conditions and moved into the new building located on five acres of ground east of the park.

In the early 1940's there was the formation of the Weldon Grade School Consolidated District and all pupils in the rural areas were transported to school by bus. In 1947 the DeLand-Weldon Unit School District was formed. The Class of 1948 was the last to be graduated from Nixon High. The pupils of grades ten, eleven and twelve went to DeLand and grade 9 became part of the junior high with the seventh and eighth grades located in the former Nixon High School building. All rural schools of the unit were closed and grades 1-6 came to the Weldon Grade building. This plan continued until the new four year high school was opened in September, 1959. This building was built on twenty acres located east of Weldon on the county line. Cost of the building was approximately \$500,000.00.

On Saturday, March 31, 1962, fire broke out in the Weldon Grade School building doing considerable damage. During the summer repairs were made.

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In 1952, a new gymnasium was added on the east side of the junior high school building. On Saturday, May 6, 1967, fire destroyed this entire unit including most all the contents. The junior high students were moved to the high school. The Board of Education made a decision to build a new structure at the site of the high school. The building cost approximately \$500,000.00 which was recovered from the insurance on the junior high school. The move was made to the new building at Easter vacation time in 1969. On May 18, 1969, the grade school was dedicated to Ernest Dickey, an educator for many years in the Weldon school system.

The last paragraph of a very detailed story on the Schools of Weldon written by Mr. Dickey - of which this is a mini-report is as follows:

"Thus, we close a century which started with a history of rural schools and ends with rural schools, since neither the Village of DeLand or Weldon has a school building used for educational purposes. Perhaps history does repeat itself, and who knows, by 2072, the school buildings may be back in the two towns and the 20 acres of the present campus may be growing sunflowers or some new crop."



Twist School (1882) on land donated by Cicero Twist. The school was also used as a place of worship by the circuit riders.



School with sheep shed attached.



DeLand-Weldon School System, 1972.

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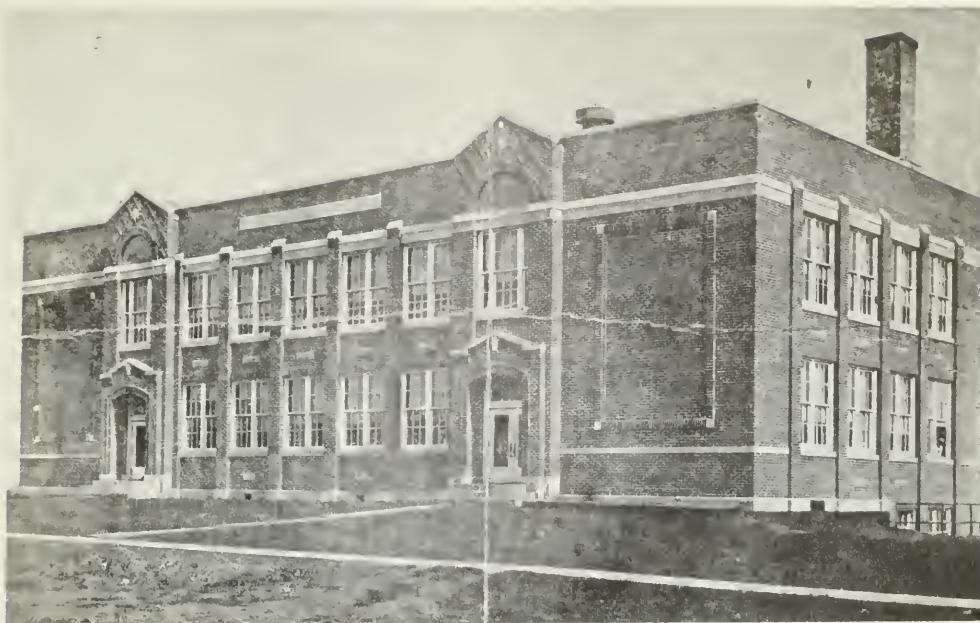
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Nixon Township High School

Weldon Public Library

The library was started in 1922, by the Weldon Women's Club, whose members solicited books around town and donated from their own libraries, purses and time. Its first location was in Grammer's Store, a grocery, where they had just one bookcase. This building now houses King's Grocery. The library next moved to Rosemond's, another grocery, which is now the Post Office. Members of the Women's Club took turns as librarians, mostly by donation of their time, keeping it open on Tuesday and Saturday.

For a while the library was housed in the place where the Town Board now meets, and in January, 1935, it moved to the township owned building across from the Methodist Church. In this building, the library used the front room and township meetings and voting was held in the back of the building. The board and polling place moved to its present location and the library was kept in the building until February, 1968. At that time the library moved to its present quarters on West Maple, the main street of Weldon. This building was formerly a doc-

tor's office and was donated to the township by the Weldon Lions Club.

In 1942, Mayor Wyatt Halcom suggested the library be taken over by the township, which would greatly improve its chances of survival. This was voted in April, 1943, at which time trustees B. W. Tillbury, Frank Galaway, Altha Twist, Mary G. Baker, Verneil Stamper and Ernest Dickey were elected. Dickey stayed on until his school duties made it impossible to do the kind of job he thought was necessary. Mary G. Baker moved to Clinton, Altha Twist remained on he board until her death in 1964. The other members have passed away.

Women's Club members Katy Thompson, Cassie Reeves, Helen Miller and Birdie Boaz, as well as many others were librarians. Miss Boaz worked with the library from 1924 until her retirement, September 30, 1967. Mrs. Pauline Perkins and Mrs. Marcia Baker succeeded Miss Boaz and the present librarian is Mrs. Eulala Schluter.

Trustees are Elaine Leisner, Virginia Reeser, Mary Olson, Marcia Baker, Bruce Axtell, Lyle Savage and Lee Shaw.

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Banks of Weldon

A bank in Weldon was first organized as a private concern by Jacob Swigart in 1887. It was later organized as a State Bank and incorporated in 1906, with Carl Swigart, president; P. M. Smallwood, vice-president; H. T. Swigart, cashier; and C. C. Lisenby, assistant cashier.

In the depression of 1931 this bank closed. A meeting was held of interested people in the community and the people approved of trying to reopen the bank as many others had tried. However, the State Banking Department would not approve the reopening and it was placed in receivership. In the final closing it paid out 47%. This affected the confidence of the people in the community. A bank or medium of exchange is one of the backbones of a town. The community was without any type of these services until 1937. In July, V. L. Shinneman, through the Citizens National Bank of Decatur, Illinois, set up the Weldon Currency Exchange along with his insurance business which was already established. These were already established in many of the villages around. Mrs. Loren Richardson helped with the insurance business and exchange. Practically all the services of the exchange was handled through the Citizens National Bank of Decatur. In the early part of 1945, after the legislature had passed a law regulating what duties they could perform, most of the exchanges downstate closed.

In February, 1945, a group of people asked that we might merge into a bank. Organization was started for a Capital of \$30,000.00, Surplus of \$6,000.00, and Reserve of \$3,000.00. Practically all of these shares were sold without going out of the

exchange. People came in and subscribed for them.

The Weldon State Bank opened for business May 1, 1945, with 91 shareholders and the following directors and officers: president, Roy Campbell; vice-president, Wyatt Halcom; directors, C. W. Shinneman, G. D. Briggs, Ocal Eastham, Cecil Shinneman, and V. L. Shinneman. V. L. Shinneman was elected cashier. Others who worked in the newly formed bank were Marjorie Holtfreter, Carol Richardson, Corwin Kingston, Mildred (Baker) Holt, Pauline (Glosser) Shearer, Grace Marcum, and Lloyd Disney. This was from 1945 to 1966.

The bank grew from a total Capital Account of \$39,000.00 to \$125,015.03 December 31, 1965.

It was hard with inflation and cost of the farmer's implements going up all of the time for the bank to be able to handle the loan demand because the law was 15% of the Capital and Surplus to any one person or business.

In 1965 the Board decided to sell the interest to Donald E. Savage, E. Lyle Savage and his son, Joseph Savage, as of December 31, 1965.

Since 1966, the bank has had a nice growth and has now reached total resources of over \$3,000,000.00. The present officers and employees are E. Lyle Savage, president; Donald E. Savage, vice-president; and Mrs. Elaine Leisner and Mrs. Carol Richardson, cashiers. The present Board of Directors are E. Lyle Savage, Donald E. Savage, Joseph L. Savage, Corwin Kingston, and Howard Poff.

Churches

The Weldon Baptist Church

The first Baptist Church services were conducted in the old American Legion Hall in Weldon, Illinois, on May 17, 1953. Brother Olen Coopridier, Missionary of the Sangamon Valley Baptist Association of Decatur, Illinois, was the first speaker.

The first Baptist Vacation Bible School was conducted in June, 1953, at the same location.

In June of the same year, the group moved two miles west of Weldon on Route 10 to the old Twist Schoolhouse. On July 12, 1953, the Weldon Baptist Church was organized with 16 charter members. Brother Lon Sefton was called as the first pastor in August, 1953. A building fund for a new church was started in September, 1954. Land from the Dinsmore estate south of Weldon on Route 48 was purchased in March, 1955 - the present location of the Baptist Church.

The construction of the church building began in March, 1956, and was dedicated in November, 1956. A farm home was given to the Baptist Church by Mr. and Mrs. Virgil Dasher, Sr., in August, 1958, to be used for the Baptist Church parsonage.

The church had services for burning the church mortgage on October 19, 1970.

There have been 245 members to the church, with the present membership of 107.

The present pastor is Brother John S. Bartels.



Baptist Church in 1972

The Catholic Church

Since there wasn't a Catholic Church in the Weldon vicinity, the early settlers of the Catholic faith traveled by hand-car to Wapella to worship.

Later the altar was moved to the Catholic Church in DeLand, and the local members worshipped there.

At a later time, about 1890, the altar was moved to the brick home of John Pearl just northeast of Weldon and then later to the frame home of Mr. Pearl at the same location, where ser-

vices were held for the local worshippers.

The St. Michael's Chapel was erected in about 1899 and was located in the west part of Weldon. Although this church was not grand in dimensions, was of modest appearance, it was pleasing to the eye. It, like the other churches in town, was a frame building.

This chapel was razed in about 1948 as there was no resident minister. Its members have worshipped in nearby churches since.

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Shiloh Chapel

Prior to the year of 1870, a Circuit Rider, a Rev. Stoddard, traveled by horseback from Saybrook to Shelbyville, his circuit including the counties of McLean, DeWitt, Macon and Shelby. Revival meetings were held in the homes and in the school-houses at the time, as he would make his rounds, which required a period of three months to make. Wantwood School, then located one mile south of where our church now stands, was the gathering place of the spiritually-inspired people of the community. In 1870, Rev. Stoddard conducted one such Revival Meeting. It is told that a Mr. M. Predmore was converted in the field, tied his team, told his neighbor to feed his cattle while he spent the day traveling to his neighbors, pleading with them to turn to the Lord - thus began the Spiritual Life of what has been known as Shiloh Community for over 100 years.

A new schoolhouse called Shiloh was built in 1870, just one mile of where our church stands and the Wantwood School was moved one mile east of it. During that year a Sunday School was organized in Shiloh School. Because of the newness, it was a convenient place to worship.

A great Revival was held in 1873. Following this the need for a church was felt so Shiloh United Brethren Church was built and dedicated January 17, 1874. Some of the faithful families at this beginning were Massey, Hendrix, Jefford, Gaedes, McCammon, McAbey, Munch, Thompson, Peads, Boyd, of which descendants of some of these families are still in the Shiloh community.

The original building was a single room, the building having additions in 1897, 1907-1909, and 1915. After the 1915 addition it was noted as one of the most up-to-date churches in the Denomination. Other improvements have been added throughout the years, and still serves the surrounding people their spiritual needs.

In the beginning Shiloh was a 4 point charge - Lane, Center Chapel, Argenta and Shiloh together. Lane was soon taken from the charge. Center Chapel in 1907. Center Chapel merged with Shiloh in 1963, so the name was changed to Shiloh Chapel. The church was remodeled again, using new pews and new furnishing from the Center Chapel Church.

In 1946, due to the merging of the two denominations, the United Brethren and the Evangelical, we were called Shiloh Evangelical United Brethren Church. In 1966 the Methodist Church and Evangelical United Brethren merged, although not officially until 1968.

Argenta and Shiloh Chapel remained a 2 point charge until 1968, when Forsyth was placed with Shiloh Chapel. They remained so until 1972, when Forsyth asked to be a 1 point charge. Shiloh was then placed with the Weldon Methodist Church. After the merger in 1968, we became known as Shiloh Chapel United Methodist.

There are now seventy-two members who are very proud of "their church on the corner" which has served the community these 102 years.

ET.

Weldon, Ill.



Catholic Church, as it was before being torn down.



Shiloh Chapel, a neighboring country EUB church and located southwest of Weldon. This church is now in a circuit with the United Methodist Church of Weldon.

The Methodist Churches - 1872 - 1972

According to records the first Sunday School and Church Services held in Nixon Township were held in the Twist School west of town. People of all faiths attended the services.

When the Village of Weldon was established in 1872, Colonel Thomas Snell, the owner of the land on which the town was built, felt the need of a church so he offered a plot of ground. The story is related that Colonel Snell promised to donate the lots for a church to any denomination that would build the first church. Since they had the largest number of members, the Baptists were expected to get the lots, but the Methodists with Rev. Weems as their first circuit pastor in charge, borrowed the money from William North to build a foundation which entitled them to the land. So in 1874, at the end of a two year period, the Methodist Church was completed and dedicated in the east end of town with Rev. Buck preaching the dedicatory sermon. This church, located at the site of the present home of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Campbell, was built at a cost of \$3,300.

In 1882, a group of Methodist Protestants who had been organized several years earlier by Rev. Goodpasture from Lincoln, Illinois, erected and dedicated another church in the north-

west part of town in the winter of 1884. Rev. A. D. Widney was the first pastor. This congregation became a part of the DeLand Circuit where it remained until 1896, when it became a separate charge. On Sunday, June 6, 1909, a beautiful new church was dedicated, the Methodist Protestant Church. This Gothic designed brick building cost \$14,500 and is still used by the United Methodists.

The remaining congregation of the first church joined the DeWitt Circuit and became the Methodist Episcopal Church. This DeWitt Circuit had been organized as the result of a mission formed as early as 1837, in the newly formed Village of DeWitt. Rev. Weems was the first circuit pastor and lived in DeWitt until a residence was built for him in Weldon.

In November, 1907, the church building, having been entirely remodeled, was rededicated. This remodeled building cost \$4,500 and was a frame structure of beautiful design. The original church building went through various stages of remodeling with rededication services but it remained on the original plot of ground given by Colonel Snell in 1872.

In the fall of 1938, one year prior to the national merger of



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the three denominations of Methodist, the two Weldon congregations federated after a separation of some sixty years - using the Methodist Protestant church and the Methodist Episcopal parsonage.

In 1958, a new educational unit to the Methodist Church was completed and consecrated. This addition provides a study for the minister, rooms for several Sunday School classes, a nursery, a kitchenette, M.Y.F. Chapel, and Fellowship Hall. Many church and social events are held in this unit.

In 1966, the Evangelical United Brethren Church and the

Methodists became United Methodists--the official merger taking place in April, 1968.

In 1968, extensive remodeling was done on the sanctuary, work being completed in November and the formal opening on December 15, 1968.

At the June, 1972, Conference the Weldorf United Methodist Church and Shiloh Chapel United Methodist Church became a circuit with Rev. John W. Connell as parish minister.

Organizations in the church are very active. This includes the UMYF, the Methodist Men, and the United Methodist Women.

United Methodist Church, 1972.



The M. P. Church and parsonage was the first frame church building.

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Weldon Lions Club

The Lions Club was organized on July 1, 1948, with Raleigh Riddle as the first president. There were 25 members. The charter meeting was held in the basement of the Methodist Church.

Through the years the club has been responsible for many community and civic projects. They are annual contributors to the Hadley School for the Blind; CARE; Camp Lions; Leaders Dog School; Dialogue. They are the Little League sponsor; have provided glasses and hearing aids for those in the community; participated in providing park playground equipment; sponsor the annual Easter Egg Hunt, Santa Claus, and the Christmas dinner. The Lions provided the Doctor's Building and were instrumental in obtaining several doctors for the

community. After there were no longer doctors available, they gave the building to the township and it is now the library. The club was responsible for getting flasher signals on Route 48, co-sponsored the tennis court; provided a resuscitator, "Rescue Annie" for the school; glaucoma screening; and have sponsored the Annual Tractor Rodeo and Homecoming for 24 years. These are just a few of their many contributions to the community.

Present officers are: Robert Sprague, president; Duane Riddle, first vice-president; Gary McConkey, second vice-president; John Barr, third vice-president; Corwin Kingston, secretary; W. D. King, treasurer; Lyle Savage, lion tamer; and Al Perring, tail twister.

Societies

Amon Chapter 136, Order of the Eastern Star

Eighty-three years ago on October 17, 1889, 14 residents of DeWitt, Illinois, joined together to form what is still known as the Amon Chapter 136, Order of the Eastern Star. On February 17, 1889, the Worthy Matron of Decatur and the Worthy Patron of Clinton met with the following people to organize this chapter: Mr. and Mrs. James (Amanda) Sutton, Mr. and Mrs. Eugene (Lillian) Groves, Mr. and Mrs. John (Elizabeth) Cain, Mrs. Emma Taylor, Mrs. Ida Cardiff, (Mrs. Cardiff and several other ladies of Clinton were also the first to start Magdalene White Shrine of Clinton), Mrs. Andrew (Mollie) Brown, Mrs. Kissah Lisenby, Mr. and Mrs. S. R. (Della) Turnipseed, and Mrs. Rebecca Nelson.

The first Worthy Matron was Mrs. Emma Taylor and Worthy Patron was Eugene Groves.

Two years after the lodge was organized the membership totaled 51. The first hall was a dark, gloomy, poorly lighted room, kerosene lamps furnishing what little light there was. In November, 1923, two gas lights were purchased and in 1933 there were electric lights in the hall.

At the Chapter's 50th birthday, membership was 163. At that time a faithful few kept the Chapter together--even if it meant traveling long hours over poor roads. Those folks of yesteryears enjoyed the Chapter as a means of getting together for they did not have the things we have today.

After 73 years in the original building, the Chapter moved to Weldon when the roll call was 79 members plus 2 honorary members.

The present roll call is 78 members plus 5 honorary members. The chapter's officers are: Helen Pearl, Worthy Matron; Jack Pearl, Worthy Patron; Margaret Clark, Associate Matron; Hubert Clark, Associate Patron; Catherine Baylor, Associate Conductress; Aletha Thayer, Conductress; Nell Savage, Chaplain; E. Lyle Savage, Treasurer; Edna Anderson, Secretary; Carl Thayer, Marshall; Marjorie Floyd, Organist; Star Points: First Star Point, Adah, Vera Barton; Second Star Point, Ruth, Stella Richter; Third Star Point, Esther, Cassie Reeves; Fourth Star Point, Martha, Ruth Savage; Fifth Star Point, Electa, Kittie Klevens; Sentinel, Myrl Reeser; Warder, Robert Barton; Flag Bearer, Donald Savage.

Amon Chapter enjoys having family gatherings with the Masons, potluck suppers and programs. As in yesteryears we can still enjoy the fruit of our ancestors and the wonderful traditions they left us. May we continue to carry on their good works and may some of us be able to add a few more words to this history when we celebrate our 100th anniversary.

Woman's Christian Temperance Union

The above named organization is more often called by a shortened title, W.C.T.U.

A group of Christian women who were definitely interested in upholding the teachings of the Bible and were dedicated to raise the morale in Weldon and surrounding community organized the first W.C.T.U. Inspiration from the mother headquarters, located at Evanston, Illinois, gave them courage to

form the first union in 1894. Some of the members, also officers were the late Miss Clara Smith, Mrs. Jennie Martin, Mrs. I. I. Nixon, Mrs. John Brown, Mrs. T. L. Covey and Mrs. Barney Tilbury. An L.T.L. headed by Miss Etta Martin was formed and worked quite actively. Throughout all these years, the subject of prohibition has always been uppermost in the minds and activities of the dedicated members. There has not been an effort for many, many years to even have a tavern in Weldon.

Some of our active members have been Mrs. Loren Richardson, who was county president for four years; Mrs. Cassie Reeves, county treasurer for 15 years; and Mrs. V. L. Shinneman who has served as local president, county president, state, national and an international officer. Her duties have caused her to travel far, even to Japan. She also has gone to Chicago many times and to California.

One outstanding work of the present W.C.T.U. is to interest grade and high school students in art contests by teaching facts by posters, and essays which are informative. Many of the entrants have won state prizes, after first winning on the local and county level.

Mozart Lodge, No. 96, K of P

The Lodge was instituted January 3, 1882. The following officers were installed: W. H. Taylor, P.C.; J. D. Brown, C.C.; William Capron, V.C.; J. C. Nichols, P.; W. A. McKelvey, K. of R. and S.; D. F. Edmiston, M. of E.; C. J. Seaburg, M. of F.; W. H. Costley, M. of A.; Daniel O'Brien, I.G.; E. F. Cresmer, O.G. In all there are twenty-five charter members.

Grand Army of the Republic

G.A.R. Chester Elton Post #554.

Weldon Lodge No. 746, AF&AM

The Weldon Lodge, No. 746 -- A.F. and A.M. was issued a charter on October 3, 1876, with the following officers: James R. Heskett, Worshipful Master; F. A. Winslow, Senior Warden; James Danison, Junior Warden; John Bosserman, Treasurer; Worship Gray, Secretary; William Hodge, Senior Deacon; A. M. Drew, Junior Deacon; William Smith, Tyler. There were only 9 charter members. On the 4th of June the hall of the order was destroyed by fire, including the records, jewels, and furniture. For the next two years the Lodge held its communications in the public school building. In 1881, they erected a new building.

Present officers are Owen Eugene Goble, Master; Thomas Goble, Senior Warden; James Clifton, Junior Warden; Lyle Savage, Secretary; V. L. Shinneman, Treasurer; Roy Fields, Tyler; Jack Pearl, Senior Deacon; Donald Savage, Junior Deacon; Myrl Reeser, Warder; Robert Barton and James Pearl, Stewards; and Thor Klevens, Chaplain.



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Weldon Rebekah Lodge No. 446

The Weldon Rebekah Lodge #446 was chartered November 18, 1915 and 97th year of Our Order, William H. Pease, Grand Marshall.

Present officers are: Noble Grand, Orville McDaniels; Vice Grand, Ida Followell, Recording Secretary and Financial Secretary, Edna Anderson; Treasurer, Gertrude Baker; Conductor, Mabel McDaniels; Warden, Gladys Shaffer; Musician, Garnett Chamberlain; Chaplain, Grace Adams; Inside Guardian, Ray Shaffer; Outside Guardian, John Followell; Right Supporter of Noble Grand, Zula Gaby; Right Supporter of Vice Grand, Leo Schmidt; Left Supporter of Vice Grand, Ethel Baker; Junior Past Noble Grand, Stella Richter; Delegate, Gladys Shaffer.

Hiter-Wene Post No. 1049, American Legion

The Legion Post 1049 was organized in 1946. It was named for James C. Hiter, and Merle Hiter, Jr., sons of Mr. and Mrs. Merle Hiter and for Carl Wene, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Wene. All three lost their lives in World War II. Edgar Lyle Glenn also lost his life in World War II.

The present officers of the post are: commander, Howard L. Poff; vice-commander, Roger Adams; junior vice-commander, Franklin Kingston; adjutant, Corwin Kingston; finance officer, William D. King.

Independent Order of Odd Fellows

I.O.O.F. No. 922 was chartered February 14, 1906.

Boy Scouts Of America

Troop 141, Weldon, Ill. The first charter was issued in March, 1938, and was sponsored by the Methodist Episcopal Church. The first Scoutmaster was E. P. Wene, with 12 scouts registered. This unit was registered until April, 1948, then dropped. It was registered again in May, 1959, and has been since.

Pack 141, Weldon, Illinois, was registered in June, 1951. For 2 years the sponsor was the Lions Club of Weldon and the first Cubmaster was Sheldon Robinson. There are 8 boys on

the original charter. The unit came back in July, 1959, sponsored by the Methodist Church and has been registered ever since.

Robert Kingston is the Institutional Representative. Corwin Kingston is Committee Chairman for the Boy Scouts and Gary McConkey is Committee Chairman for the Cub-Scouts. Gary McConkey is also Den Leader for the Webelos with 7 registered. Don Reynolds is Cubmaster with 14 registered. Den Mothers are Mrs. Don Reynolds and Mrs. Clifford Dobbs.

The Weldon United Methodist is sponsor for the Scouts.

Junior Champions 4-H Club

The Junior Champions 4-H Club was first organized in 1935. It began as two clubs, known as the Champion Workers and the Junior Club, which was made up of younger members. Mrs. Hazel Schmidt, a teacher in the county, was the first leader with six girls in her club. Those first 4-H girls were Myrtle Burris, Dora Tool, Hazel Tool, Grace Schmidt, Ruth Schmidt and Louise Reeser.

Mrs. Myrl Reeser then took over, combined the two clubs and changed the name to Junior Champion Workers. She led the club for eleven years. Other leaders throughout the years

were Mrs. Wayne Jiles, Mrs. Bernard Thomas, Mrs. Lester Baker, Mrs. Delmar Gibson, Mrs. Marion West, Mrs. Harold Reeser, Mrs. Owen Jamison, Mrs. Lawrence Meredith, Mrs. Tom Birley, Mrs. Ivan Leisner, Mrs. Lloyd Reeser, and Mrs. Ronnie Edwards. Present leaders are Mrs. John Barr who has led for fifteen years, Mrs. Howard Poff who has led for seven years, and Mrs. Charles Wachob who has led for two years. There are twenty-five girls in the present club who can take more than that many different projects. 4-H is no longer only sewing, cooking, calves or hogs. If you can't find a project, there is "Do Your Own Thing."

Wel-Don 4-H Club

The Wel-Don 4-H Club was first organized in 1939 by Phil Reed. He also gave the club its name. There have been many leaders of this Ag Club. When Otis Floyd was leader in 1945, there were 27 members, also under the leadership of Robert

Floyd in 1949, there were 27. In 1965, with Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Goble as leaders, there were 32 enrolled.

Present leaders are Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Anderson, Mr. and Mrs. Al Perring, and Mr. and Mrs. Lorin Riddle. There are ten members.

Weldon Town and Country Woman's Club

The Weldon Town and Country Woman's Club was organized in November, 1937, at the home of Phyllis Lisenby with fourteen members. The first president was Lotus Jamison.

Outstanding achievement was to get a Fire Protection District organized in 1947-1948. Other projects have been playground equipment for the park; typewriter, frame and mouth-piece for Judy Mix; medicine for Judy Mix; and scholarships

to the Egyptian Music Camp for several students. There have been numerous projects they have completed.

Four charter members, Lotus Jamison, Hope Lisenby, Phyllis Lisenby and Mildred Riddle are still members.

Present officers are: Wilma Goble, president; Carol Richardson, vice-president; Jennie Baker, secretary; Ellena Barr, treasurer; Mildred Riddle, parliamentarian.

Weldon Woman's Club 1899-1972

In June, 1899, this organization joined the state, becoming a member of the District in 1902, the County in 1928, and in 1930, the General Federation of Women's Clubs.

The club has helped with and conducted various and many worthwhile projects locally. Perhaps the longest and most beneficial project to the community was the library. The club members had the first library in a store in 1923, and supported it for 20 years. Club women of those twenty years deserve much credit for their efforts in supporting this project when books were needed, especially during the depression years of the early thirties.

The present president is Mrs. Robert Barton.

When the great study movement of women became popular, a group of Weldon women felt the need of just such an organization.

The first meeting was held January 11, 1899, in the home of Mrs. Ira Nixon. Four women were present and the following officers were elected: president, Mrs. Ira Nixon; vice-president, Mrs. Harry Swigart; secretary, Mrs. T. L. Covey; treasurer, Mrs. Charles Gale, who was also the organist.

The Ideal Improvement Club became the name of the club, which later became known as The Weldon Woman's Club.

The object of this club is sociability, intellectual improvement, mutual benefit and community service.

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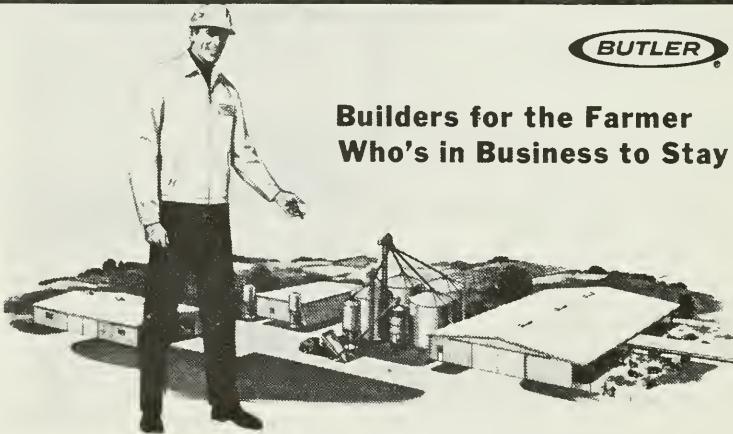
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Weldon Fire Department

Weldon began in 1872, but it was in 1897 that a good water system was built at a cost of \$5,000. -including the electric light plant. An ample supply of water was obtained from a well 280 feet in depth. Some of the water mains were of wood and the last one was dug up in the early 1930's.

The fire equipment of the village consisted of a number of fire plugs and over 500 feet of hose on a hose cart pulled by citizens. Of course there was the bucket brigade. In the mid twenties a Ford Roadster chassis was purchased for the Fire Department and a small fire truck was assembled. It was bright red, had a hose rack and baskets on each side for hose, and a brass bell. It was a vacuum pump, using the engine of the truck to force the water. The department later had a chemical cart with one tank. It was pulled in the back of a car. Later on Roy Fields mounted a second chemical tank on the cart.

In the years of 1946-1947, the Town and Country Club and the trustees, the late James Coffman, George Lurshen, and Wyatt Halcom organized the Weldon Fire District. Twenty-five charter members worked to help make it a success. The first

truck was a 1947 International which was kept in the Town Hall garage. In 1957, the Weldon Fire House was built. It houses a 1958 International pumper with a 500 gallon tank and pumps 500 gallons per minute. There is also a 1963 International Truck with 1,000 gallon tank and pumps 1,000 gallons a minute, and a 1970 International with 750 gallon capacity, pumping 750 gallons per minute.

The department has several pieces of extra equipment including a resuscitator which is available to the community.

The village has 28 fire hydrants and all new mains with the exception of four blocks. The water tower holds approximately 50,000 gallons. The water is tested and treated to insure pure water to the users.

The Fire District trustees are Hugh Bergland, Donald Lisenby and Harold Reeser; Robert Milton, chief; Ivan Leisner, assistant chief; Jim Clifton, assistant chief; and Lawrence Meredith, secretary-treasurer. Four members, Ray B. Adams, Lawrence Meredith, Charles Workman and O. J. McDaniels, are 25 year members of the department.

Village and Township Officials

(1972)

Village President:

Richard Perkins

Village Clerk:

Patricia Lisenby

Village Treasurer:

Marie Bowman

Village Board:

V. L. Shinneman, Oscar Baylor, Cecil R. Baker, Lester Anderson, Glindo Eastham, Carsie Wilson

Village Water and Street Maintenance:

Orville Wilson

Postmaster:

Lloyd Shinneman

Rural Mail Carrier:

Claudene Perkins

Township Supervisor:

Ernest Dickey

Township Road Commissioner:

James Pearl

Township Clerk:

Marie Bowman

Township Assessor:

Frank Pearl

Township Auditors:

Hugh Bergland, Phillip Lisenby, Robert Keel

Friends Creek Special Drainage:

Albert Monkman, Robert Keel, Burnett Goken

DeWitt-Piatt County Health Officer:

Bruce Axtell

Fire Department:

Robert Milton, chief

Ivan Leisner, assistant chief

Jim Clifton, assistant chief

Lawrence Meredith, secretary-treasurer

Library Board:

Elaine Lesiner, president; Mary Olson, secretary;

Lyle Savage, Bruce Axtell, Lee Shaw, Virginia Reeser, Marcia Baker

Librarians:

Mrs. Carl Schluter

Rita Schluter, assistant

School Board:

Allison Perring, president; Marjorie Huisenga, secretary;

Franklin Kingston, Howard Gantz, Donald Reynolds, Larry Baker, Robert Moberly

Park Board:

James Trigg, Ray Adams, V. L. Shinneman

Cemetery Board:

Howard Poff, Melroy Spencer, Charles Workman

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Gary McConkey

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Rev. John S. Bartels, Weldon Baptist Church

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PROGRAM: Mr. and Mrs. William Martin and Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Dobbs, Co-chairmen

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PUBLICITY: Dorothy Smith, Chairman

Robert Kingston, Velda Mix, Thelma Workman, Don Reynolds, Raleigh Riddle

ROYALTY: Sandra Rich, Chairman

Jeanne Seal, Eva Rich, Virginia Reeser, Lois Ferguson

SEATING: Frank Rudisill, Chairman

George Tool, Dean Baker, Gordon Wilson, Rod Stroh

SOUVENIRS: Wilma Goble, Chairman

Maxine Poff, Ellena Barr, Myrtle Meredith, Town and Country Club

TRAFFIC AND SAFETY: Gary McConkey, Chairman

Boy Scouts, Franklin Kingston, Lloyd Reeser, Howard Poff, Gene Olson, Lloyd Shinneman, Robert Keel, Roger Tedrick

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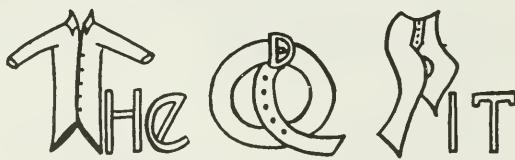
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Maypole Dance, one of many given by school girls on the grounds of the Weldon Grade and High School.

Weldon Centennial Program

FRIDAY - AUGUST 25

10:00 A.M.	Celebration Starts Birthday Party
1:00 - 4:00 P.M.	Horseshoe Pitching Games Oat Threshing Exhibits
4:00 - 7:00 P.M.	Lions Club Fish Fry
7:30 P.M.	David Houston & The Persuaders & Mark Dalton plus Shoji, World Champion Fiddler
10:00 P.M.	Square Dance, Ozzie Pearl, Callér, with Dick Dalton & His Band

SATURDAY - AUGUST 26

10:30 A.M.	Threshing, Soapmaking, Arrowhead Making Display of Stone Age Tools - All Day
12:30 P.M.	Judging of Parade Entries
1:30 P.M.	Parade
3:00 - 5:00 P.M.	Johnny Barton & Corn Belt Country Style Show
4:00 - 7:00 P.M.	Pork Chop Supper
7:00 P.M.	Crowning of Royalty Beard Judging Lions Club Drawing Dress Revue Lions Club Drawing
8:45 P.M.	"HONOR TO OUR HERITAGE" Pageant
10:30 P.M.	Teen Dance

Weldon Centennial Program

SUNDAY - AUGUST 27

10:00 A.M.	Community-Wide United Worship Service Community-Wide Choir
11:30 A.M.	Community Basket Dinner
1:00 P.M.	Threshing Antique Parade Entries in Place
2:00 P.M.	Antique Parade
3:30 - 5:30 P.M.	Hank Haynes and the Bearsdale Municipal Band
6:30 - 9:30 P.M.	Gospel Singers: The Gospel III and Alvis The Mathews Family
2:00 - 5:00 P.M.	Antiques on display each day at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Kingston, 1-1/2 blocks northwest of park.

The Centennial Committee wishes to thank all those who did research for this centennial and those who furnished other necessary information and help. There are countless names not recorded. This kind of cooperation by so many along with those who made monetary contributions is essential and all these efforts are gratefully appreciated.

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A Weldon High School class which pictures many of the Weldon residents of today. First row, left to right, Rachel Summers, Beulah Fern Wilson, Pearl Swearingen, Lucille Schwegm, Lila --, Oatha Polston, Aiden Swearingen, Lee Pippen. Second row, Iva Emery, Gladys Hunt, Mildred Goble, Fleet Summers, Paul Chapin, Karl Peterson, Charles Adams. Third row, Martha Collier, Velda Hunt, Harry Goble, W. H. Gray, Ray Olson, Lawrence Long, Vern Shinneman. Fourth row, Ura Shearer, Beatrice Bales, Clarence Pippen, Roy Johnson, principal, Clarence Keele and Bill Costley.

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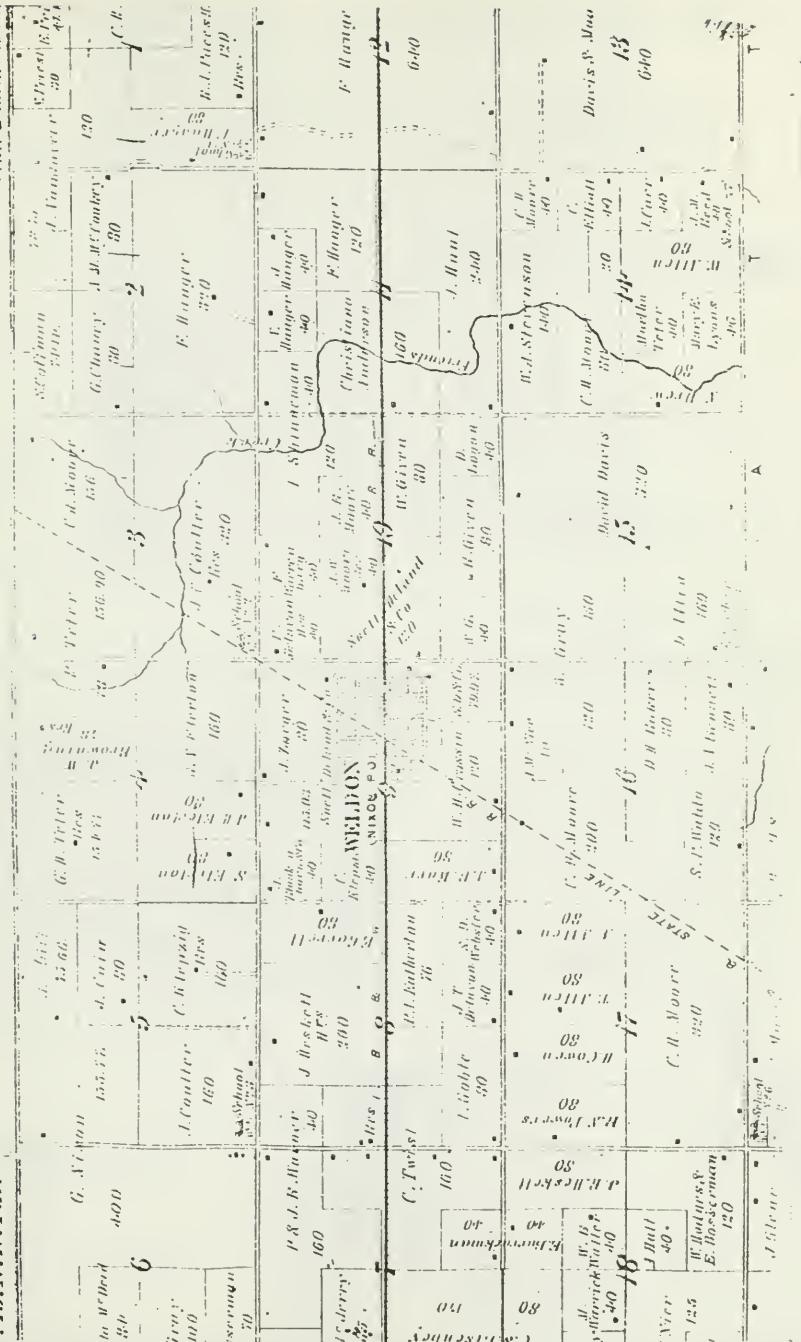
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Louis Dressler, shown in an old-time rural kitchen. The cookstove was fired with corn cobs and wood.



Roy Fields, driver, and Russell Danison were owners of this 1923 Model T racer. During the years from 1924 to 1927 this car was entered in many races. Left to right, Russell Danison, Basil Hunt, Delbert Salors, Elrey Danison and Otto Allen.

German Band made up of Cris Crossan, Warner Sillman, Art McNichols and an unidentified man.



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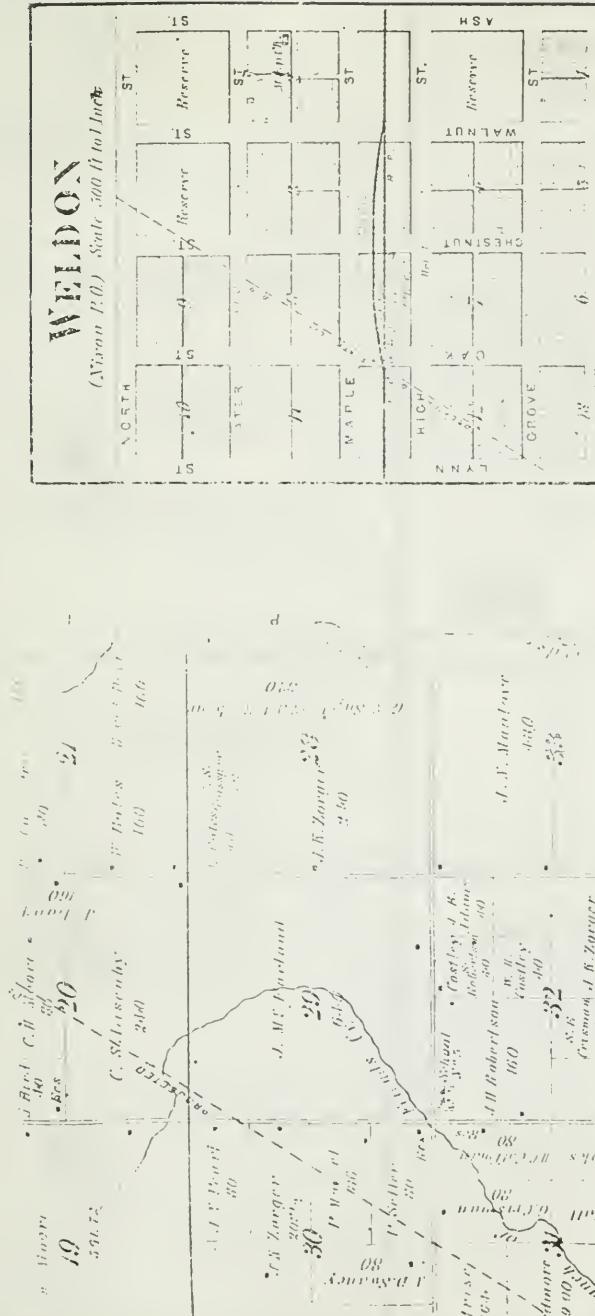


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2

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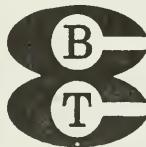
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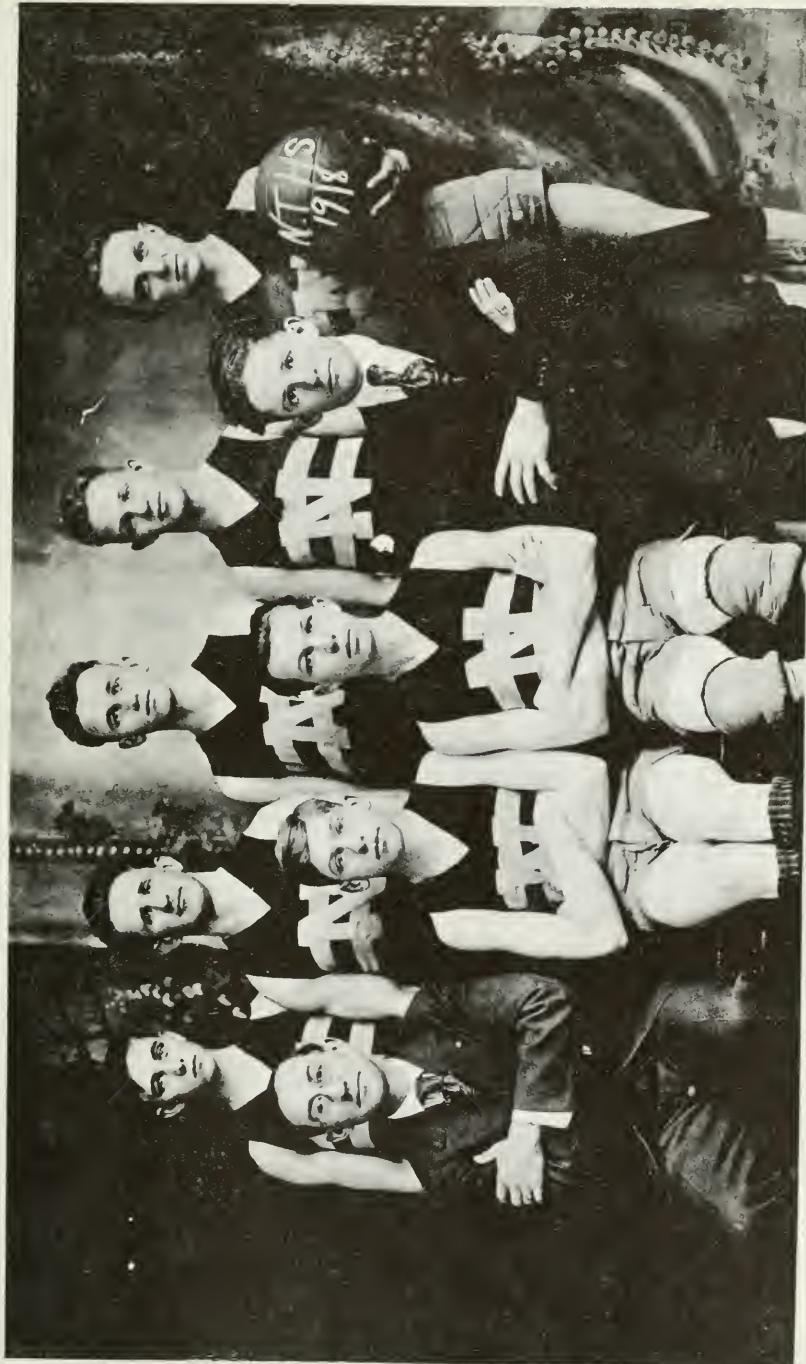
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Baseball, basketball players, Horse and bicycle races also made quite a name for Weldon. The first four-year Nixon Township High School team from Weldon played a Decatur team for the district championship in 1918. Pictured, back row, left to right, Ernest Dickey, Harry Goble, V. L. Shinneman, Bud Montgomery and Bud Adams. Front row, left to right, Roy H. Johnson, Ira Richardson, Fleet Summers and Grey Stillman.

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The John Henry Colescott family, taken at a small cow pasture in Weldon.



Hunters found many ponds on surrounding farms where wild duck would stop during migration. Shown are Charlie Lisenby, Sherman Glen, Ray Shaffer and Charlie Ayres.



Pouring hard road from Route 10 through Weldon to Route 48. Hartman and Clark were the contractors.

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Fred Dressler in his 1912 Case car.



The Weldon IOOF band won first place in the county in 1908. Pictured, left to right, back row, Ernest C. Crossan, Drew Barnes, Charles C. Lisenby, Maco Summers, leader, Hank Clemons, Charles Barclay and Denver Fullerton. Middle row, Harry Barclay, Neal Lane, Floyd Capron, Carl Polen, W. G. (Bert) Hunt, Curt Hitley and William Berkley. Front row, Vern Workman, Clyde Goble, Lester Hunt, Dr. A. V. Foote, Elmer Long and Lee Persons.



C. C. Bales and Tom Allen with mule hitched to a cart.

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Nixon Township High School DeWitt County Champions, 1932-33. Front row, left to right, Don Wene, Virgil Long, Duane McConkey, Pat Sims, Lee Shaw, Hubert Lisenby, R. A. Marsh and Ottis Twist. Back row, left to right, Bernard Davies, Paul Brighton, Elmer (Bus) Glenn, Dale Hoops, Edwin Jiles, Harold Reeser, Don King, Sheldon Robinson. Top left, Dallas Myers, coach, and top, right, Raymond McIlvenna, manager.

Grace Moody, long to be remembered as telephone operator serving the village of Weldon and surrounding community.



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The Fred Baker family home was built by William H. Crossan in 1867, prior to the village of Weldon, on land bordering Weldon on the south and west.



Seaborg machine shop and home, sketched in 1885, built and operated by Charles J. Seaborg. He came to town with \$1,160.00 and he built nine dwelling homes in Weldon, besides his residence and shop and owned 53 lots. His shop was for the building and repair of wagons.

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Isaac Shinneman family. The farm has been operated continuously since 1859 by the Shinnemans. Elmer Shinneman now resides on the farm. Three families are represented in this picture.

The Weldon post office and exchange were in the same building on the south side of Main Street. The Exchange was opened July 1, 1937 by V. L. Shinneman. Carl Reeser was the postmaster.



Cassie Reeves "Mother of the Year." Mrs. Cassie Reeves of Weldon was selected Mother-of-the-Year of the State of Illinois in 1957. In 1927 her husband died, leaving her with four small children, the oldest eight and the youngest under 10 months. Having been a school teacher before she married, she went back to teaching and managing the farm. Her three sons, Colin, Richard and Robert graduated from the University of Illinois and her daughter, Margaret, graduated from Illinois State Normal.

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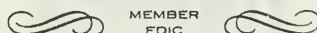
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The Dode Garrett family - Dora, Minnie, Rex, Mrs. Garrett, Lyle, Mr. Garrett, Harry.



The 1908 Reo owned by the Fred Twist family. This picture shows the change from horse transportation to car.

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